

FOREWORD
TO
FELICITATION VOLUME
“SRIKANTHIKA”

The greatness of a University is gauged not by its quantitative strength in terms of buildings, teachers and students, but by the quality of research work done and the intellectual pursuits attained by the research scholars and teachers. From this point of view the Mysore University can proudly claim a place of distinction among many other Universities in India. The devout votaries of knowledge and the intellectual luminaries like Dr. S. Srikanta Sastri are mainly instrumental for the reputation of this great University. Scholarship is nothing but intellectual ability coupled with industry and devotion to duty. Srikanta Sastri has been really the embodiment of these qualities. His whole life has been dedicated to the pursuit of truth and the acquisition of knowledge.

Even before I entered the Maharaja’s College as a student of the Honours Class in the year 1938 Srikanta Sastri had reached the pinnacle of glory as a great scholar. His knowledge of History was phenomenal and encyclopædic in character. A good number of books both in English and Kannada and as many as four hundred articles on Indian History, Culture, Language and Literature bear ample testimony to his varied interest, profound scholarship and recondite erudition. He treaded the entire gamut of Karnataka history and culture like a colossus. Sincerity, honesty and truthfulness are the hallmark of his scholarship. One may reverentially disagree with the views expressed by him, as, for example, on the original home of the Aryans, the Aryan Civilisation and even on Purandaradasa. Nobody disputes his intellectual abilities or sincerity of purpose. His scholarship is neither a shadow nor an imitation of some great personality. He is undisputedly an original thinker and a meticulous and austere seeker of truth.

Though he is a person who shuns publicity he permits anybody without any reservation to unlock the store-house of his vast knowledge. Nobody returns from him disappointed. He has a ready answer to any doubt lurking in the minds of scholars or students. If a person needing solutions to his problems happens to be far away from him he need only spend twenty five naya paise for a stamp. The reply is there within three or four days. This is my experience too.

It is really very fitting that a man of his stature who has spent the long years of his life at the altar of the Goddess Saraswati should be honoured by presenting a Commemoration Volume. I am extremely happy to find that all the articles published in this volume relate to Karnataka History and Culture which are very dear to Prof. Srikanta Sastri. All the articles are decidedly the result of deep study, long research and fieldwork. They present a very useful material for the research worker as well as the student of History. In a way it can be said that it is an encyclopædia of Karnataka History. I should congratulate the editors and the contributors for having taken lot of pains to bring forth this volume in as short a period as possible.

On this happy occasion one is constrained to feel sincerely whether we should remain contented with the presentation of this volume to Dr. Srikanta Sastri. No. What about the stupendous number of his articles which form sources of Karnataka and Indian History and which are scattered over a large number of magazines and journals? I sincerely think that the best way to honour him appropriately is by compiling his works and publishing them in as many volumes as possible. It is not for his sake that we should publish them, but for the sake of posterity and in the interest of the development of scholarship and research in the respective fields. The University of Mysore will certainly consider the possibility of publishing the articles in book form if the author is agreeable. It will certainly be a matter of great pleasure and pride for me to associate myself in this sacred task.

May Prof. Srikanta Sastri and his works be a beacon light and source of inspiration for all the scholars in India in general and Karnataka in particular for many many years to come!

January 10, 1973
Mysore

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Vice-Chancellor